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PROGRAMME HUMAN SECURITY

FOR INTERNATIONAL AID, ANOTHER PATH IS POSSIBLE

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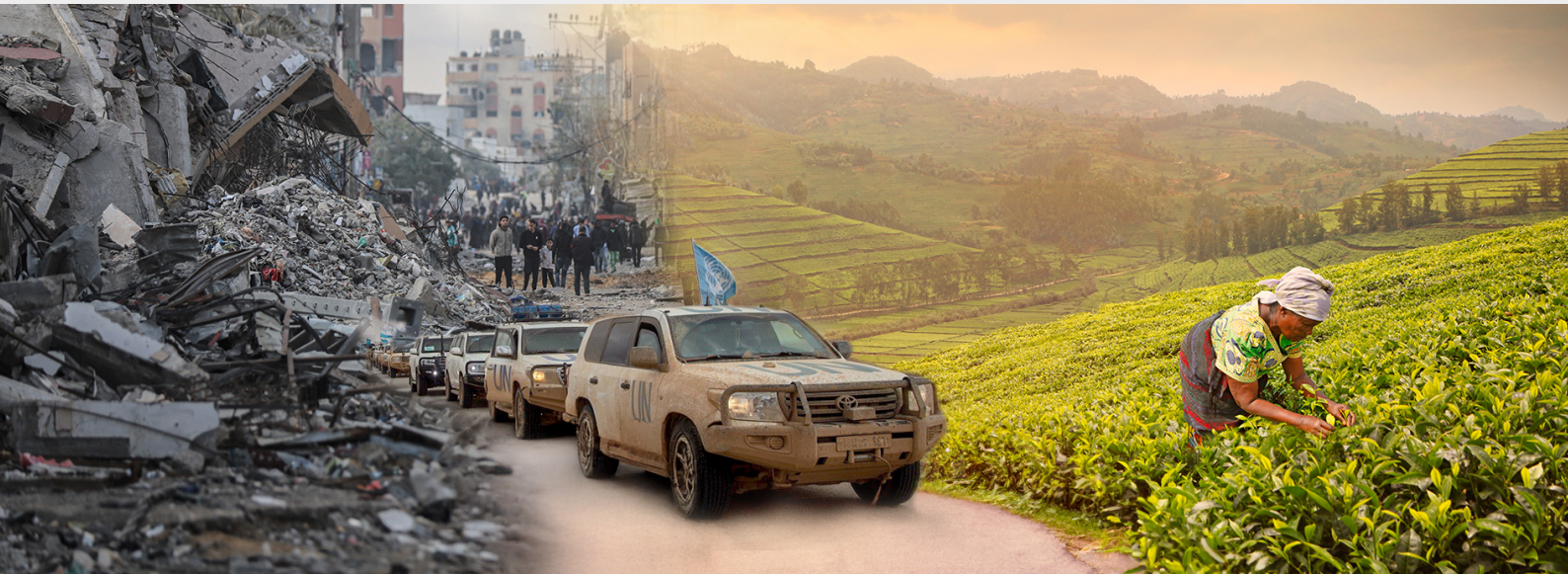

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Human security is an interdisciplinary, people-centred approach that responds to the complexity of contemporary crises. It redefines traditional security paradigms by emphasising protection from systemic threats—such as violence, poverty, health, the environment, displacement, and governance—and by strengthening local capacities.

In a world marked by the convergence of crises—armed conflicts, pandemics, climate change, and governance breakdowns—the IRIS Human Security programme seeks to analyse these issues through the lens of social justice, sustainable development, and positive, inclusive peace. It also aims to inform public and international action that is rooted in social vulnerabilities and resilience.

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Let us begin with a simple but often overlooked truth: the people who care for others, who act with empathy, generosity, and integrity, are struggling. They are teachers and health workers, social innovators and small-scale farmers, community leaders and public servants, creatives and changemakers within institutions. They devote their time and energy to improving lives beyond their own, yet they do so with diminishing resources, limited recognition, and growing personal sacrifice.

Across the globe, the burden they carry is deepening. Structural violence, rising inequality, persistent poverty, health crises, and environmental collapse show no signs of abating. And yet, those best equipped to address these challenges—the courageous, ethical, and visionary—are too often undervalued, underfunded, and overlooked. Some are growing disillusioned. Others are leaving the fight entirely.

Recent developments have only compounded the urgency. From the erosion of global solidarity structures to the rollback of public funding for aid and welfare, the most vulnerable among us are bearing the cost. In many parts of the world, tax reforms have favored the wealthiest without delivering the promised benefits of economic growth or fiscal balance. Instead of enabling progress, these policies have accelerated wealth concentration, undermined democratic accountability, and weakened the collective capacity to act in the public interest.

And yet, there is hope.

The call to reimagine and reinvest in the tools of public interest is not only necessary—it is within reach. For that, another path is possible. A path that does not reduce collective wellbeing to political cycles or institutional self-interest. A path rooted in trust, built on ethics, human security, and powered by the collective intelligence of communities working for the common good.

It will be a journey where tangible, human-centered solutions are at the core. Choosing a different approach is trusting that the future of social and environmental justice depends not only on what we build, but on *how* we build it: with integrity, transparency, and shared purpose.

This is where the journey begins. First, we will try to identify the root of the disease, some of the unknown symptoms, and then explore possible remedies.

IS THE ROOT OF THE PROBLEM… IDEOLOGICAL?

As Naomi Oreskes points out, neoliberal ideas—backed by a strong mix of think tanks, intellectual movements, media influence, and financial support—gained dominance after the 1960s.[1] They won many key debates and helped make concepts like efficiency, growth, value creation, and minimal government intervention the guiding principles of global policy. At the heart of this model is a core belief: that accumulating wealth, fostering economic growth, and advancing technology—even if these benefits are concentrated among a privileged few—will eventually help everyone by spreading knowledge, improving infrastructure, and raising living standards. Starting in the 1980s, many countries adopted this vision of individual success, where better lives were promised through hard work and the generation of economic value. Today, that belief is being seriously questioned.

Around the world, people are now rethinking the development model that has shaped government policies since the 1980s. Neoliberal policies were meant to drive rapid economic growth and prosperity for all through free trade, financial liberalization, privatization of public services, and reduced government involvement. But now, worsening climate change, the rise of automation, weakened social safety nets in a competitive global tax system, and growing inequalities in wealth and power have deeply shaken confidence in this model.

The current economic system creates a divided society, where many people are left behind and public services like education, justice, and healthcare continue to decline. Unequal access to quality food, housing, education, and wealth, further worsened by discrimination based on gender, religion, or ethnicity, is putting the future of young generations at risk. This "liberal fundamentalism" has not only caused a social crisis, but has also intensified the environmental, security, and political challenges we now face. The threats to our planet and human survival are unprecedented.

SHAKY FOUNDATIONS

Hence, it is the foundations of our houses, the liberal development models themselves, that are being questioned. Implemented globally since the 1980s, they have failed to act in the interest of the majority. In many countries, neither the general quality of life, social cohesion, nor social and environmental justice have improved under liberal leaders' leadership. A study

[1] Naomi Oreskes, "Le mythe du marché tout-puissant", Sismique Podcast, Ep. 145, 26 February 2025. Accessible here: https://open.spotify.com/episode/5Iqifq5vaRCoQkEMSwVII7

of the UNSW has revealed that the neoliberal economic system has failed to deliver improvements in social equality and environmental health, and should not guide future policy in the face of existential threats like climate change.[2] As a consequence, the source of rationality, as well as the classic academic-professional paths, from which leaders derived the credibility and legitimacy of their public discourse, seems to have dried up. This "regime of truth," which offered them influence over individual consciousness and collective events, has suddenly become exhausted. The liberal technocratic elites and experts, who had self-appointed the right to lead the "incompetent and irrational" masses, find themselves outpaced.

The supposed "irrational impulses" affecting the populace are reactions to the deficiencies of rationality and the collapse of expert discourse, reflecting the inadequacies of our ruling systems. The success of populist movements is a reaction to the sense of emptiness and powerlessness of the elites, often characterized as “the system”, illustrated by their constant penchant for theatrics, contradictory promises, incoherent application of “exemplary behaviours”, and technocratic jargon that is detached from factual realities.

In the face of these challenges, only autocratic displays of power and society projects seem temporarily to distract from societal woes. In the Sahel, the military was hailed as heroes by segments of the youth upon seizing power. In France, the entire demographic under thirty-five views political leaders as corrupt, and only half now consider democracy to be the "best possible system."[3] In the United States, this proportion drops to nearly a quarter, which is also the percentage of young Americans favoring a military regime[4].

THE (OBVIOUS) ARCHITECT OF CHAOS

Actors of violence are highly organized and deeply rooted**.** With long-standing histories and sophisticated strategies of power, they are often anchored in tradition and capable of producing their own norms. These actors, particularly within the economies of violence, including criminal organizations, are not static entities; they are porous, adaptive biological organisms, continuously learning from and evolving with their environment. In many ways,

[2] 2024. *‘Driving Environmental Destruction and Social Inequality’:* Current Economic System Fails Examination by Sustainability Experts. September 25, 2024. UNSW Sydney

[3] Anne Muxel, *Génération What ? Une consultation de grande ampleur de la jeunesse française*, CEVIPOF, 2 016.

[4] Fractures françaises 2018, Ipsos, juillet 2018. ; Yasha Mounk*, The people vs. Democracy. Why Our Freedom Is in Danger and How to Save It*, HUP, Cambridge, 2018.

they are at the forefront of innovation, skillfully navigating and even mastering the latest developments in economic and political systems.

Through global connections and a profound understanding of political systems and consumerist societies, violent actors constantly develop new sources of illicit revenue. One clear example is their involvement in the counterfeit industry, one of the most profitable illicit trades worldwide. Another is their inventive use of digital tools—not only to secure communications and operations, but also to generate entirely new income streams. According to The United Nations Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, counterfeiting is now the second largest source of criminal income worldwide[5].

Structured over decades, and sometimes even centuries, these groups are well-financed, highly coordinated, and driven by ideological, criminal, or political motives—often an opaque blend of all three. They position themselves as protectors and providers, claiming to offer safety, purpose, and improvement in people's lives. At both individual and collective levels, they provide identity and an alternative worldview with clear, accessible norms and rules. Their narrative often revolves around a grand, even messianic or violent destiny, underpinned by religious or ideological paradigms.

Central to their rhetoric is the creation of an enemy—an ever-present threat embodied in a scapegoat, often defined in simplistic racial or religious terms. Violent proselytizers, populist demagogues, and mafia leaders alike thrive on the failures of the state and the cracks in modern society. Their growing power presents enormous challenges to democratic institutions, territorial control, economic stability, and financial systems.

The stronger these actors become, the slimmer the chances of achieving any form of democratic, social, or environmental transformation. Since the 1970s, a growing and increasingly diverse range of violent actors has taken on regulatory roles in both isolated rural zones and large urban centers. They have capitalized on the state's inability to meet fundamental sovereign duties such as education, healthcare, and security. Over time, they have gained the trust and support of local populations by responding to their unmet needs.

For instance, radical religious actors—Hindu, Christian, Muslim, and Jewish—promote heightened religiosity, denounce corruption and gerontocracy, and often champion ideals of greater equality. Yet, their ideological frameworks also challenge the legitimacy of traditional religious and cultural authorities, such as elders, customary rituals, marriages, music, and dances. Amplified by social media, these radical worldviews—designed and spread by the so-

[5] *Counterfeiting & Terrorism*, 2016 Edition. United Nations Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice

called "architects of chaos"—threaten democratic institutions, liberal education, social cohesion, and cultural diversity. These architects do not merely exploit existing economic, financial, and governance structures—they actively work to dismantle and reconfigure them to serve their interests. No transition will be feasible if we don't acknowledge their power.

THE (LESS OBVIOUS) ARCHITECT OF CHAOS

One often overlooked reality is that our global system is built not only on promises of growth and progress, but also on subtle, structural, and systemic violence. Far from enabling ecological or social transformation, the current ideological and economic framework actively blocks it. When public markets are driven by corruption and coercion, they cease to be tools for positive change. The same holds for political systems that weaponize critiques of social or environmental action. Violence is deeply embedded in labor and economic systems, woven into global value chains.

In *From Conflictual Systems to a Society of Peace: Nonviolence facing organized evil*, Roberto Mancini stressed that the role of the global economic system is particularly significant because it is precisely due to this system that the logic of conflict is succeeding in its universalizing process[6]. Globalization has produced both cooperation and progress, but also widened inequalities and tensions. Trade liberalization, deregulation, and financial globalization have allowed transnational corporations and criminal networks to amass enormous wealth and power, often at the expense of local communities, workers, and ecosystems. This economic concentration fuels structural violence by empowering violent actors and perpetuating poverty, unemployment, and marginalization, especially in the Global South.

In industries from tobacco and alcohol to pharmaceuticals (e.g., opioids), industrial agriculture, fishing, and fossil fuels, profit is frequently prioritized over safety, ethics, and truth. Science and media are undermined, while dangerous products continue to circulate. In some cases, like Karachi, even water distribution is controlled by criminal groups. Mafia infiltration into the financial sector is increasingly evident. In 2016, HSBC paid $1.9 billion in a U.S. settlement over money laundering for Mexican cartels. In 2010, Wachovia Bank was fined a mere $160 million for failing to monitor $378 billion in suspicious transfers.

[6] Mancini, Roberto. 2024. *From Conflictual Systems to a Society of Peace: Nonviolence Facing Organized Evil*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, Diogenes , Volume 61 , Issue 3-4: Theories and Practices of Non-Violence , August 2014

Systemic violence is also visible in the exploitation of labor. Ian Ndegwa talks about "wage slavery" that he describes as a "Modern Plague" where workers in both formal and informal sectors face low pay, poor conditions, and little control over their work lives[7]. To cut costs, multinational corporations outsource to countries with weak labor laws, trapping workers in cycles of poverty and precarious conditions. As Louise Shelley notes, this exploitation strips workers of autonomy, dignity, and a voice in economic life, reducing them to disposable cogs in the production machine. The diverse skills, knowledge, and experiences of people are dismissed and undervalued[8].

Environmental destruction is another facet of global capitalism's violence, driven by unsustainable production and consumption that cause ecological collapse and human suffering. It systematically accelerates deforestation, pollution, climate change, and biodiversity loss—all of which deepen human suffering. Natural resource extraction is often facilitated by armed violence, with military, police, mercenary, and rebel forces ensuring access and control for powerful corporate and state actors, leading to both environmental degradation and human rights abuses[9]. They exploit both labor and ecosystems for profit, even in supposedly "green" sectors. Illegal mining is indeed a good example, as it is a booming, low-risk industry for these actors, particularly because global sustainability efforts often overlook the violent and illicit origins of essential raw materials, all used in the "tech-solutionism" approaches to environmental transition.

Whether in official or informal economies, natural resource exploitation is often orchestrated by violent actors—warlords, criminals, corrupt officials, and corporations—who profit while degrading both human and ecological well-being. Even "green" industries rely heavily on illegally sourced materials. Mining, for example, is a highly lucrative, low-risk venture for criminal networks, multinationals, and corrupt elites. Across the globe, local communities—villagers, farmers, fishers—who resist these extractive operations face threats, intimidation, and violence. Meanwhile, the global economy rarely questions the origins of essential resources like sand, let alone who profits from them. Illicit extraction is rampant and

[7] Ndegwa, Ian. 2023. *"Wage Slavery: A Modern Plague."* LinkedIn. https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/wage-slavery-modern-plague-ian-ndegwa/

[8] Louise Shelley, *Human Trafficking and the Economies of violence,* in Soto-Mayor G. (ed., 2024), *The Economies of violence: the Hidden Variable*, De Gruyt-Brill

[9] Downey, Liam, Eric Bonds, and Katherine Clark. 2010. "*Natural Resource Extraction, Armed Violence, and Environmental Degradation."* Organization & Environment 23

widespread, and the global black market for sand could be worth USD 300 billion annually (Taylor, 2024)[10].

A NEW COLLECTIVE LEVERAGE: REBUILDING HUMAN-CENTERED ENERGY

We already possess the values, principles, and critical analyses of the current system's limitations. The real challenge lies in transforming this knowledge into collective momentum. To do so, we must understand why narratives driven by violent actors resonate: because they tap into real and deep-rooted emotions — feelings of injustice, exclusion, humiliation, and stagnation. When people feel trapped in a society where success, access to public services, or positions of influence seem predetermined or out of reach, anger brews. In that vacuum, fearmongers step in.

To rebuild trust and belonging, we must forge new forms of coalition — ones that are inclusive, dynamic, and human-centered. This means embracing diverse stories, new forms of talent, and redefining what success looks like. We must break free from closed, self-referential networks and foster new collective foundations grounded in shared purpose, empathy, and mutual recognition. As mentioned by the World Bank, this calls for a shift in our approach to one that places people at the center of development efforts. Where it is essential to understand how the complex web of human dynamics plays out and how individuals connect, collaborate, and respond to change[11].

A key step is dismantling toxic narratives that pit so-called "wealth generators" against those labeled as "burdens" on society[12]. Since the 1980s, dominant political discourses have painted public workers, welfare recipients, migrants, and the unemployed as parasitic dependents on a supposedly overstrained state. These narratives justify underinvestment in essential services while ignoring the systemic inequality built into neoliberal models that idolize wealth, consumption, and individualism.

In reality, this system deepens social divides by rewarding only a narrow band of educational paths, professions, and values, while undervaluing the breadth of voices, skills, and creative

[10] Taylor, David. 2024. "*Inside the Crime Rings Trafficking Sand*". Scientific American. https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/sand-mafias-are-plundering-the-earth/

[11] Poli, Maria, Mathieu Cloutier, Samuel Garoni, and Sandra Valdivia Teixeira. 2024. *The Power of Effective Coalitions and Collective Action in Building Trust and Achieving Sustainable Development*. May 22. The World Bank Blog

[12] Piketty, T. (2014). *Capital in the Twenty-First Century*. Harvard University Press.

potential in our society. It marginalizes entire communities and wastes human talent. In the workplace, this manifests as growing wage gaps, the erosion of dignity in labor, and the normalization of precarious, meaningless jobs, fueling frustration and alienation, particularly among younger generations.

As people seek identity, pride, and purpose, some are drawn to divisive ideologies that weaponize their pain. But rather than vilify this anger, we must listen to it—and channel it. We need new narratives of dignity and shared success, rooted in real-life experiences and pathways that show what inclusive achievement looks like. Neuroscientific evidence suggests that empathy and exposure to different perspectives can counteract instinctive biases and reduce polarization, underscoring the need for new narratives rooted in dignity and shared success[13].

This transformation also requires ending the chronic underinvestment in health, education, and social solidarity. We need new tools, methods, and financial mechanisms to reimagine collective contributions — not as costs, but as investments with multiplying effects.

Essential professions like waste collectors, nurses, researchers, or early childhood educators cannot be reduced to mere budgetary "burdens." They are foundational to the well-being and resilience of our society. A notable 2009 study by the **New Economics Foundation** in the UK, *A Bit Rich*, quantified this: high-earning bankers and traders were found to destroy seven times more social value than they created, while low-wage workers in care, recycling, and education contributed up to 12 times the value of their salaries[14].

These findings challenge the conventional logic of value. They invite us to reimagine the economy not as a race to accumulate capital, but as a shared project of human flourishing, where contribution is measured not just in profit, but in care, creativity, resilience, and collective well-being. In this new vision, we build not only an economy, but a society—rooted in justice, fueled by dignity, and held together by shared purpose.

[13] World Economic Forum. *"Us versus Them: How Neurophilosophy Explains Our Divided Politics."* World Economic Forum, October 3, 2016. https://www.weforum.org/stories/2016/10/us-versus-them-how-neurophilosophy-explains-populism-racism-and-extremism/

[14] Lawlor, E., Kersley, H., & Steed, S. (2009). *A Bit Rich: Calculating the Real Value to Society of Different Professions*. Londres : New Economics Foundation (nef). URL : https://neweconomics.org/uploads/files/8c16eabdbadf83ca79_ojm6b0fzh.pdf.

A NEW COMPASS FOR SUPPORTING PUBLIC INTEREST INNOVATION

The current mechanisms designed to support public interest initiatives are fundamentally flawed. This does not mean that public interest action itself lacks value—on the contrary, countless efforts across the globe have produced vital social and environmental progress. But the systems intended to enable and amplify these actions often fail to serve their purpose. Rather than guiding societies toward greater equity and resilience, they risk entrenching the very imbalances they seek to overcome.

As Zambian economist Dambisa Moyo argued in her 2009 book *Dead Aid*, conventional aid models have not only failed to deliver sustainable progress, they may have actively deepened structural problems. While Africa receives the largest share of official aid, it has seen a rise in global poverty concentration, from 10% in 1970 to 75% today, with projections nearing 90% by 2030[15]. Despite billions in aid, tangible impact on growth and empowerment remains limited.

These sobering trends reflect broader failures tied to the influence of *New Public Management*—the adoption of neoliberal private-sector principles in the governance of public interest[16]. Efficiency, return on investment, and performance metrics have replaced values like solidarity, justice, and shared well-being[17]. This neoliberal logic has steered public interest support away from real social needs and toward a dematerialized global economy where visibility, scale, and compliance matter more than actual human impact.

Organizations now shape their strategies to satisfy funders, rather than the people they serve. They compete for attention and resources in a system that rewards alignment with donor expectations, not long-term relevance. Even frameworks like the Sustainable Development Goals, while well-intentioned, often reduce complex challenges into numerical indicators disconnected from lived realities[18].

This trend has generated a toxic ecosystem—one where collaboration is undermined by rivalry, and where burnout and cynicism are rife among those committed to the common good. Under pressure to demonstrate fast, scalable outcomes, stakeholders stage costly conferences and high-profile initiatives that may inflate impact reports but fail to produce

[15] Challenges (2025). *En 2030, 80 % des pauvres de la planète seront Africains*. [En ligne]. Disponible sur : https://www.challenges.fr/monde/en-2030-80-des-pauvres-de-la-planete-seront-africains_597390

[16] Matyjasik, Nicolas, et Marcel Guenoun (dir.). *En finir avec le New Public Management*. Paris : Institut de la gestion publique et du développement économique (IGPDE), 2019. 248 p. DOI : 10.4000/books.igpde.5756

[17] Knafo, Samuel. "Neoliberalism and the Origins of Public Management." Review of International Political Economy, 2019

[18] Manolopoulos, Markos. « *The Pros and Cons of the SDG Framework* », *The Climate*, 6 février 2023. Disponible en ligne : https://theclimatenews.co.uk/the-pros-and-cons-of-the-sdg-framework/

lasting change. This disconnect fosters a quiet form of systemic violence: eroding trust, marginalizing grassroots actors, and devaluing real social engagement. Activist Dan Palotta, at the CLA Foundation Conference in 2016, defended the necessity to help move donation focus away from statistics related to overhead and fundraising and focus on outcomes to propel social change[19].

REDEFINING THE FOUNDATIONS OF SUPPORT

Generosity is being questioned everywhere, but what if our need was not more aid, but a new paradigm of support—one grounded in autonomy, ethics, and trust?

While generosity remains a core tenet of international cooperation, traditional aid frameworks have reached a point of diminishing returns. As early critiques by economist Peter Bauer highlighted, external aid that circumvents or disempowers local institutions can unintentionally erode the very capacity for self-governance it purports to strengthen[20]. More recently, transparency watchdog *Publish What You Fund* reported that only a quarter of global aid meets minimum transparency standards, reinforcing the view that the issue lies less in the availability of funds than in the assumptions underpinning their use[21]. Too often, social and humanitarian investments are framed as expenses to be minimized rather than as long-term, collective assets. At the same time, the structural barriers encountered by social innovators across contexts and sectors remain remarkably consistent. Funding remains overwhelmingly short-term and project-based, impeding strategic growth, organizational resilience, and team well-being.

Conditionalities are rigid, administrative burdens are high, and impact metrics frequently disconnected from the lived realities of the communities served. These pressures incentivize compliance over creativity and reporting over reflection, leaving many promising initiatives trapped in cycles of burnout and underperformance. Solutions rooted in lived experience are developed by community leaders and frontline actors. They are not just implementers but visionaries embedded in the ecosystems they serve.

[19] Eckman, Jackie. *"Public and Donor Expectations Can Restrict Nonprofit Spending and Growth." CLA Foundation*, 2016. https://www.claconnect.com/en/resources/articles/public-and-donor-expectations-can-restrict-nonprofit-spending-and-growth

[20] Shleifer, Andrei. 2009. Peter Bauer and the Failure of Foreign Aid. Cato Journal 29(3): 379-390.

[21] Publish What You Fund. *Aid Transparency Index 2016*. Publish What You Fund, 2016.

Yet many face isolation, lacking access to mentorship, shared infrastructure, or replicable models. In response, a growing ecosystem of support is emerging. Initiatives like Activ'Action, Ashoka, AVISE, Banlieues Santé, the B Corp Movement, Force for Good, Jokkolabs, Make Sense, Spring Impact, the Skoll Foundation, Tickets for Change, Time for the Planet, and others champion peer collaboration, ethical governance, and trust-based networks.

Egregor, as part of this expanding movement, does not claim a central position but contributes to this paradigm shift by offering context-sensitive, co-created support grounded in long-term accompaniment rather than prescriptive intervention. Together, these actors point toward a different model of impact: one that treats ethics not as constraints but as the creative architecture of durable and dignified change.

FROM DIAGNOSTIC TO STRATEGIC INTERVENTION

Building on these examples, a coherent model of support can be articulated across four analytical layers:

Level	Mechanism	Expected Outcome
Local Grounding	Co-designed, needs-driven support delivered by practitioners rather than standardized templates.	Enhanced relevance; strengthened agency
Structural Reinforcement	Diagnostic frameworks to identify governance, HR, financial, and partnership bottlenecks.	Improved organizational resilience
Ecosystem Mobilization	Global networks and collaborative platforms that share tools, mentorship, and adaptive learning loops.	Scalable, context-sensitive diffusion
Advocacy - systemic changes	Support the evolution of funding and partnership' mechanisms at the public and private levels	Adapted funding schemes to support change-makers

Traditional funding often isolates actors—civil society organizations, funders, technical partners—each working in silos and competing for limited resources. Yet today's challenges demand something else entirely: collaboration over competition, resilience over compliance, and long-term thinking over quick wins. Successful organizations recognize the value of pooling resources and expertise, and case studies show that collaborative efforts (such as food bank networks or environmental coalitions) yield greater impact than isolated action[22].

To move from critique to meaningful transformation, we must fundamentally rethink how support is conceived and delivered.

First, this means reframing support not as a transactional expense but as a shared societal investment. Public and private actors alike should see their contributions through the lens of long-term collective value, rather than short-term financial cost.

Second, achieving sustainable impact requires breaking away from project-based logic. Nicola Crosta, CEO and Founder at Impact 46, revealed in their recent global survey that 82% of over 4,000 non-profits called for a shift from project-based funding to unrestricted support[23]. Funders and policymakers must begin financing the essential, often invisible functions that allow organizations to thrive, such as governance, human resources, team well-being, and internal learning. No initiative, however promising, can grow or endure without these structural capacities.

Third, support mechanisms must become more adaptive and long-term. Too many funding schemes still demand rigid deliverables on tight timelines, even though social transformation is rarely linear. What's needed are flexible, multi-year frameworks that make space for iteration, experimentation, and learning.

Fourth, we must redefine impact. Rather than imposing metrics from above, evaluation should emerge through close dialogue with communities, blending qualitative and quantitative insights that reflect lived realities. As highlighted by the International Association for Impact Assessment (2024), involving local stakeholders, especially

[22] FundsforNGOs. "How to Balance Competition and Cooperation in the Nonprofit Sector." FundsforNGOs, February, 9th 2025, https://us.fundsforngos.org/articles/how-to-balance-competition-and-cooperation-in-the-nonprofit-sect or/ . Accessed May, 20th 2025.

[23] Crosta, Nicola. Strategic Giving - Why and how Foundations should move from project funding to unrestricted funding.September? 3rd 2019. https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/strategic-giving-why-how-foundations-should-move-from-nicola-crosta/

beneficiaries and communities directly affected, helps ensure that assessments are grounded in real experiences, not just external standards[24].

Finally, transformation cannot occur in isolation. The development of shared infrastructure—peer networks, collaborative platforms, and communities of practice—is critical. These structures enable cross-sector learning, mutual accountability, and the replication of successful models.

Some organisations embody this emerging logic. They work hand-in-hand with grassroots innovators to structure and launch projects, offering strategic, organizational, and technical support from day one. At later stages, others from venture philanthropists to accelerators, public institutions, and NGO's networks step in to help these initiatives grow, scale, and adapt to new contexts—not through top-down templates, but through tailored accompaniment grounded in trust and co-creation. This continuum of support, from incubation to replication, helps ensure that innovation is not only born but also lasts.

[24] 43rd Annual Conference of the International Association for Impact Assessment (IAIA24): Impact Assessment for a Just Transformation. 24–27 Apr. 2024, The Convention Centre Dublin, Dublin, Ireland.

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